

The Hunters and the Hunted

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Summary: The rules are simple: Hunters win by finding and killing the hunted; hunted win by escaping and outsmarting the hunters. It's a sick game made by freaks who love watching others suffer, and Armin has just been branded as one of the hunted...

The Hunters and the Hunted

****This idea has been stuck in my head for awhile, being influenced by movies such as Hunger Games and anime such as Future Diary (which I HIGHLY recommend to anyone looking for a new anime to watch. You won't regret it! [as long as you can handle freaky yandere, that is...]) Anyway, I don't plan on writing this like all my other work, I'm taking a slightly different route by writing each chapter as an "episode." Hopefully that sounds as cool on the computer as it does in my head XD****

****Also, I'm really sorry for those who are still waiting for Ghost of Christa Lenz 2 to be updated ;-; I'm working on it guys, don't lose hope!****

****...****

The Hunters and the Hunted... According to rumors, it's a mysterious game created by terrorists just looking for something to satisfy their sick, twisted pleasure. However, despite the clues the police find, they have never been able to crack down on those responsible. Rumors say the terrorists are getting smarter, creating new ways to enjoy the game without authorities shutting them down. If that's true, then the game might be impossible to stop.

Still... It's just rumors, right?

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"Armin..." A woman's voice pierced through the young man's slumber.

"Armiiiiiiiiin... It's time to wake up, Armin." A chuckle. "You have a big day ahead of you, I hope you're ready!"

He opened his eyes, slowly and heavily. Yawning, the young man stood up and stretched, his aching back popping loudly. He drew in his breath, not expecting that feeling at all. Rubbing his back, he threw his feet over the side of his bed, reaching for the bottle of water that stood on his nightstand. Twisting the cap off, he raised it to his lips. Or at least he thought he did.

In reality he splashed it into his eye.

Yelping in surprise, the young man jumped from his bed, rubbing his eye in circles with the back of his hand. Groaning, he put the bottle down and reached down to pick up a random shirt that had been carelessly tossed to the ground the night before. He brought it up to his nose, sniffing it to check whether or not it was still sort of wearable. Grumbling to himself, he slid it on and walked out of his room, not bothering to put on any pants.

The unmistakable aroma of bacon danced into his nose, and he eagerly entered the kitchen to find a young Asian woman sizzling the glorious breakfast. She was wearing a white cooking apron, dressed in nothing but sweatpants and no top or bra. Wait a second...

"M-Mikasa?!" The man stammered, doing a double take. "Why on earth aren't you wearing anything on top?!"

The woman turned to her roommate with her usual calm expression, her eyes not revealing any hint of embarrassment. "I wasn't expecting you to be up yet, Armin," she casually explained. Turning back to her task, she scoffed. "A simple 'good morning' would've sufficed, you know."

"Oh..." Armin murmured, shaking his head as he sat down, making sure to avoid staring at the beautiful girl. "G-good morning." He greeted lamely.

"Good morning to you as well," Mikasa said with a slight smirk as she handed him a small plate of bacon. "Sorry for surprising you, Armin," she apologized as she started to fill her own plate. "I thought today was your day off, I was expecting you to sleep in." She sat down across from her friend, taking a bite out of her breakfast.

Armin sighed. "It is my day off," he mumbled. "But I thought you woke me up."

Mikasa blinked. "I... I didn't wake you up," she told him.

Armin bit into his bacon. "Well who woke-" He froze, his eyes slowly peeking over at the direction of his room. "You... You didn't wake me up..." He gasped.

Mikasa bit her lip and reached across the table, resting her hand on Armin's. "Um..." She began, unsure. "Are you alright, Armin?"

Armin shook his head. "Y-yeah..." He answered. "Must have been just a dream." He stared off into space for another minute, before slowly turning back to his roommate. "Anyway... Did Eren call back?" He wondered, changing the subject.

Mikasa sighed at the mention of her adoptive brother. "No, of course he didn't," she hissed as she folded her arms across her chest. "Damn idiot is too busy getting laid by hookers and getting stoned to worry about us anymore."

Armin bit his lip, regretting the fact that he even brought up Eren Jaeger. Eren and Mikasa were adoptive siblings, and back in the day they were extremely close. But all that changed when the young man had met Hitch, a girl from the wrong side of the tracks. One thing led to another, and soon enough the Eren the roommates once knew was long gone, being replaced by an obnoxious, foul mouthed, uncaring human being.

Armin stood up and walked over to the woman across from him, placing a hand on her shoulder. "Hey..." He murmured, leaning down to face her. "He'll be alright, I'm sure." It was a lie, Armin was certain that Eren was not going back to who he used to be. Mikasa also knew this, and she shook her head with a scoff.

"We both know that's not going to happen, Armin," she growled, gritting her teeth. Armin flinched, nervous that he only provoked her more. Then, Mikasa's softened, and she patted the blonde's hand. "But thank you, anyway."

Armin smiled and nodded, and then stood up. "Tell you what," he said. "After breakfast, I'll go rent a movie for us to watch, okay?"

Mikasa smiled back. "Make it a horror?" She asked him. Armin hesitated for a brief moment. Unlike Mikasa, he was a complete coward when it came to scary movies. Heck, when he was a kid he kept his eyes closed for over half of the movie Gremlins. However, he knew Mikasa loved them, so he gave her a nod.

"Will do," he agreed, sitting down at the table once again.

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"Did you finish selecting the hunted?" A man on the phone questioned.

"Yes," the woman holding the phone confirmed. "Number 7, Armin Arlert, is the final member of the hunted. He should be getting the message in about an hour."

"Good," the man chuckled. "Let's hope that this year's hunted puts up a better fight than the last one, our audience was very disappointed."

"Understood, sir," the woman said. "Don't worry, I was very careful with my selections, I'm certain that this year will be very enjoyable!"

"It better be," the man growled. "We don't want a repeat of the time all of them refused to play the game."

"Most of the hunters this year are criminals," the woman reassured. "Trust me, they won't hesitate."

"Good..." The man paused. "The game begins in an hour, yes?"

The woman smirked. "That's correct," she answered. "In fact, number 3 of the hunters is rumored to be in number 7 of the hunted's area right now."

"Good work, Hanji," the man praised. "Maybe this means we'll get some early action this year."

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Armin hummed a small tune to himself as he walked out of the movie rental store, glancing down at the movie he had bought for himself and Mikasa. It was an old slasher flick from the 80's, as cheesy as cheesy could be. Still, he was fairly sure Mikasa could find something to like about it. After all, she always was a fan on horror.

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"C'mon, Armin!" Eren lightly teased as he poked the boy under the covers. "It wasn't THAT scary!"

"M-maybe not for you..." The small child under the covers whimpered. "But you know I can't stand that kind of stuff..."

"Awww, don't be such a baby!" Eren whined, sitting on top of Armin. "Even Mikasa wasn't scared, and she's a girl!"

"Thanks," the girl next to them deadpanned. She then lifted up the covers, a smile forming as she looked at the boy under them. "Tell you what," she said. "You, me, and Eren will all live together someday, that way you won't have to be scared anymore. Okay?"

Armin blushed a bit, but nodded with a huge grin on his young face. "Okay!"

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'Well,' Armin thought. 'She sorta kept her promise.'

However, the memory left him distracted, and he suddenly felt himself run right smack into another person. He started to lose his balance, but whoever he ran into swooped him back onto his feet before he could fall. Before Armin could speak to the person, he felt a sharp pain shoot into his neck, and with a startled cry he fell back to the ground, his hand tightly pressed against the left side of his neck. He looked around, and saw someone stare at him a few moments before walking away, disappearing into the crowd of people walking through the streets.

"W-wait..!" Armin called out, but the figure was already gone. Armin sighed, and slowly stood back up to his feet. "What was that about..?" He wondered out loud. Shaking his head, he continued to head back home. "Oh well... Mikasa's waiting for me..."

However, he didn't notice a man slowly following him, looking the young man up and down. 'This is it?' He thought. 'I was hoping I

would run into one who might provide some fun.' He patted the left side of his neck, stopping as he continued to observe the blonde. 'Ah, well, I get what I get and I don't throw a fit.' The man chuckled, licking his lips in anticipation.

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"Mikasa, I'm home!" Armin announced as he kicked off his shoes, glancing into the living room to see if his roommate was there. Sure enough, she was, watching the news as she nibbled on a cookie. The oriental turned to Armin, smiling.

"Took you long enough," she teased, patting the spot on the sofa next to her. "What'd you get?"

"Some cheesy slasher flick," Armin replied, sitting next to the beautiful girl. He nodded at the television. "What's the news today?" He asked her, handing her the film.

"A serial killer has apparently just escaped death row," she answered. "Remember that series of killings that happened last year?" She sighed. "Well it's that guy who escaped."

"Police currently have no leads on the whereabouts of convicted serial killer Connie Springer, who was to receive the death sentence for a total of fifteen killings," the reporter was saying, a nervous and worried look poking through his professional demeanor. The screen flashed a couple images of the killer, revealing him to be a short, shaved-headed man. "Authorities advise that all residents within the south side of Rose City to lock their doors and windows tonight, as that is where the killings took place last year."

"Thank God we live in the north side," Mikasa murmured.

Armin nodded. "Still... We should lock up the place tonight as a precaution." He then sighed. "Anyway, let's go ahead and watch that movie, okay?"

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Later that night, after locking up the house, Armin and Mikasa had said their goodnights to each other before retreating back to their rooms. Mikasa laid down on her bed and slowly picked up the scarf Eren had given her when they were kids. It was a beautiful red, it reminded the woman of simpler times when Eren was still a good person. She felt a tear trickle down her cheek, and within seconds the usually calm and collected girl started to weep, clutching the scarf close to her.

Armin listened from the other side of his friend's door, wishing he could help her somehow. But he knew Mikasa wouldn't want to speak with him, he would have to comfort her in the morning. Sighing sadly, the young man entered his own room, flicking on the light switch. And when he did, he froze.

Someone was in his room, standing right next to his closet.

Short, with a shaved head...

Armin gasped, pressing himself up against a wall. "You... You're..."

His heart started pounding in his chest as he recognized the man from the news report.

"Sssssshhhhhh..." Connie Springer shushed, his eyes filled with "friendly" malice. "We don't want to attract any attention, now do we?"

"W-w-what are you doing here?" Armin quivered, his eyes wide with fear as he noticed Connie slowly stroking a kitchen knife.

"You're pretty unlucky, y'know," Connie muttered, admiring his reflection on the knife. "Normally I wouldn't even think of going to the north, but rules say that's my job."

"Rules?" Armin squeaked. His hand slowly started to reach towards his phone in his pocket. "What rules...?" He barely held in his scream as Connie threw the knife at his hand, barely missing as the knife stuck into the wall. He stared at it in silent terror.

"Don't even think about it, blondie," Connie snarled. "Let me finish explaining first." He cleared his throat. "Anyway, you and I have been chosen for a game. And not just any game! 'The Hunters and the Hunted!'"

Armin finally started to move and speak again as he started to recognize that name. "Wait, but..." He gulped. "I thought that the game was just a rumor! An urban legend!"

Connie laughed. "I thought the same thing," he hooted. "But apparently, just yesterday I received the brand of the hunter." He pointed at Armin. "And you, my victim, has been branded as the one who will be hunted!"

"But... But how was I...?" Armin started to question, but he froze when he remembered the burning sensation on his neck. "Wait... But..."

"Figuring it out, eh?" Connie sneered. "It's hard to notice unless you look, but the mark is definitely there. See?" He tilted his head up, and Armin saw a faint outline of what appeared to be a tiger on the skin. Connie looked back at Armin, a devious smirk on his face. "You have one too, although yours is a bit different from mine."

"..." Armin stared at the deranged monster in front of him in shock and horror, his hand slowly pulling out the knife stuck in the wall.

"But whatever," Connie said, shrugging as he pulled out a second knife. He pointed it at Armin, grinning wickedly. "I am the hunter, you are my prey!" He laughed, and then lunged at his victim. "LET THE HUNT BEGIN!"

Armin cried out as he barely dodged the killer's attack, lashing out with his own knife only to miss completely. Connie laughed as he watched the other man try to fight him. "You got some guts, kid!" He praised, before swiftly sinking his teeth into Armin's arm. The blonde screamed in pain as he felt the killer's teeth pierce through his flesh, and in his pain he accidentally dropped his only means of defense. Suddenly, he was kicked in the gut by Connie, who leaped on

top of him, effectively pinning him to the ground.

"SCORE ONE FOR THE HUNTERS!" Connie hollered as he prepared to drive his knife into Armin's heart. But suddenly, something hit him on the side of the head, leaving him dazed. Stumbling off of his prey, Connie looked up to see a young oriental woman holding a wooden baseball bat. "Wha-" He started, but was cut off when Mikasa struck him over the head again as hard as she possibly could. Connie crumpled to the ground, unconscious. Mikasa sighed as she dropped the blood stained baseball bat, sinking to her knees as Armin wrapped his arms around her.

"Mikasa, are you okay?" Armin gasped, rubbing his friend's back.

"I'm fine," Mikasa mumbled as she relaxed in her roommate's grasp. "But are you alright? He didn't hurt you, right?"

Armin shook his head as he felt Mikasa hug him back. "No, I'm fine," he assured. "Thank you... For saving me."

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Sooo... What do you think? Yay? Nay? Don't forget to review! And remember, stay wykkyd!

End
file.